HOST THOUGHTFULLY 043

# Clear at a Comfortable Pace



MAKE SPACE WITHOUT RUSHING THE TABLE.

Notice when the group is ready to move on, then clear the dinner plates with a light touch. Keep the conversation comfortable while making room for the next part of the evening.

## 1 Look at the whole table

Notice whether someone is still enjoying the course. Ask before removing a plate that may still be in use.

**Why:** Guests do not need to match the pace of the quickest eater.

## 2 Clear a manageable amount

Take a few items at a time or ask a helper to join you. Keep stacking and scraping away from the table.

**Why:** The change between courses can feel calm rather than noisy and busy.

## 3 Keep what is still wanted

Leave water and other drinks guests are enjoying. Ask before taking a glass or utensil that may still be useful.

**Why:** You create space without making the evening feel over.

### PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

**A small question**

'May I take this?' is enough when you are unsure. Let the answer guide the moment.

**Give a helper one task**

Ask someone to collect dinner plates while you prepare dessert. Keep the task simple and complete.

**Move the noise into the kitchen**

Set down sturdy dishes there instead of sorting and scraping beside the guests.

**Return to the conversation**

Clear what is needed, then come back. The next course does not require the whole kitchen to be spotless.

**THE PLATING MINDSET**

Clear to make guests comfortable, with enough attention to avoid rushing the person still enjoying dinner.